

PSITTAScene

The Magazine of the WORLD PARROT TRUST



Summer 2015



WORLD PARROT TRUST

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FROM THE EDITOR

I'm sitting here writing this and musing on how people can make a tremendous difference in the world. People *can* and *do* have an impact – and it's not always negative. One person who has made a huge difference to the World Parrot Trust is Evet Loewen. Evet's been a longtime friend and tenacious supporter of the Trust – her smarts, intuition and philanthropy have been beyond measure. Most of all, she has an enduring passion for parrots – and so, on the suggestion of WPT's Jamie Gilardi, she decided to take a trip back to a land she once knew and loved to visit a pair of WPT projects she has supported. It was, in her words, transformational – she witnessed the incredible work being done for parrots in Brazil, and realized her role in it – a very powerful thing. Part one of her remarkable trip is chronicled in this issue.

The same can be said for researchers in the field – the people who are at ground zero, so to speak, of the effort to understand parrots and their ecology. People like Christina Zdenek, a veteran of several years of Palm Cockatoo research. She and project leader Rob Heinsohn's mission to find out the meaning of these birds' peculiar drumming is detailed here. It's all in the name of science: to grasp the subtleties of parrot behaviour is to understand their lives – an awesome power in the fight to protect them.

Understanding wild parrots is one thing. Discovering what makes our companion parrots tick is another – something that alternately fascinates and troubles many people. Lee McGuire is one such person, and she has resolved to make it her mission to better understand companion parrot behaviour. Read her article on how to work with an enduring issue for many parrot caregivers: a screaming bird.

One thing I've decided from all this: the possibilities are infinite. One person *can* affect great change. And people together can move a mountain. We can help to undo some of the bad that's happened in this world. □



Desi

Desi Milpacher,
Editor

ON OUR COVERS

FRONT **Palm Cockatoo** pair (*Probosciger aterrimus macgillivrayi*) enjoying the breeze at Lockhart River, Queensland, Australia. Palm Cockatoos fashion drum-tools from tree branches, but their reasons for doing it are still a mystery to researchers. See **Quest for the Drumming Cockatoos**, page 4. © Christina N. Zdenek

BACK **Mitred Conures** (*Aratinga mitrata*) feeding on persimmon fruit. Native to Argentina, Bolivia and Peru, introduced flocks also thrive in many locations within the United States, including California, Florida and Hawaii. © Mike Bowles & Loretta Erickson | californiaparrots.us



Vinaceous Amazon © André Saldenberg

BACK TO BRAZIL
— page 12

quest for the DRUMMING COCKATOOS

PHOTOS AND ARTICLE BY CHRISTINA N. ZDENEK

Imagine living in an abandoned slaughter-house. Now imagine a two-meter Coastal Taipan—the world's third most venomous land-snake—moving through your quarters during data entry work, or a big old bull snorting and stomping whilst staring you down in the bush. This is researching Palm Cockatoos, and this is the story of the quest to record their rare and extraordinary drumming behaviour in the remote region of Cape York Peninsula.

IN AUSTRALIA, IT IS ONLY ON THE TIP OF Cape York where the magnificent Palm Cockatoo (*Probosciger aterrimus*) resides. Being the heaviest cockatoo in the world (out of 21 species), as well as one of the longest, it also has a massive beak and lengthy crest, which it can raise up and down depending on its mood. As if its physical splendor was not impressive enough, this bird possesses a worldly unique and eccentric habit: it drums.

Fashioning a stick to drum with on a tree is clearly tool-use, but unlike chimpanzees and New Caledonian Crows who use tools to forage, Palm Cockatoos, or

palms, obtain no caloric benefit from the act of drumming. So why do they do it? Ever since its written discovery in 1984, drumming by palms has long been a mystery to science. What does the bizarre behaviour entail? And in what context does it occur? These questions and more have held a long-term fascination for Robert Heinsohn at The Australian National University, but it was not until recently, with the employment of myself, that searching for these answers could finally be a reality. It has now been the focus of The Palm Cockatoo Project for the past three years with some great successes.



IT WAS JUNE 2012. I GRABBED MY CAMO bush hat, strapped on my leather boots and set out on an incredible journey to find and record palms drumming.

For six weeks, I trekked, crept, and crawled through the long grass, chasing these elusive cockatoos for kilometers on end in the Lockhart River region. The mornings often left me soaking wet from the waist down from the dew-coated grass, while the afternoons regularly ended by torchlight and GPS. The hottest part of the tropical day was spent doing numerous tree-hollow inspections. With the glaring sun in my eyes, my fatiguing arms struggled to keep a 10-meter extendable pole vertical during windy conditions.

Just as the mounted camera reached the hollow entrance for a prized view inside, hostile Green Ants (*Oecophylla smaragdina*) commence a counter-attack on their intruder (me) via injecting painful amounts of formic acid into my sweaty skin. Clenching my teeth in pain, I tell myself, 'Focus, and finish the job first. Address ant problem later. Mind over matter.'

Needless to say, despite mighty efforts and much to my frustration, the first field season attempt was a disappointing dud. I was sadly unable to record even one drumming sequence that year. In the two years prior during my Masters degree, I had only seen drumming on eight occasions. That is less than once per month, on average, or one per about 130 hours of fieldwork. So I knew how rare drumming is and how notoriously difficult palmies are to study (largely due to their wary nature), but zero in six weeks was

thoroughly disheartening. Fortunately my boss, Rob Heinsohn at The Australian National University, still had faith in me.

Trying to forget the previous years' frustrations, I gathered my optimism, grabbed my camera gear, and headed for the long grass again. It was an extreme three months and, true to the Australian bush, it was boom and bust out there, with ebbs and flows, ups and downs. Some weeks were completely fruitless, while others left my volunteers and I unable to keep up with all the data entry, memory-card clearing, battery-charging, and backing up of precious data. On one occasion, I was slowly approaching frequently calling birds, when suddenly I heard the distinct sound of drumming. Knock...knock, knock, knock. Hardwood against hardwood. My heart immediately began racing.

In desperation to obtain line of sight without disturbing the discernibly excited subjects, I cautiously performed slow and steady yoga-like moves over large logs and around dried, crackly leaves.

I caught my breath and peered through a small opening through the foliage. There! Drumming! It felt like a mini-miracle when I finally hit the record button and captured it all on film. With the bird cheek-blushing, crest flicking, body rocking, and feather raising, it is hard to avoid anthropomorphising its behaviour into seemingly human emotions.

Much to my supervisor's and my pleasant surprise, it was a groundbreaking field season. Warranted persistence—as well as a bit of luck—led to a whopping 13 drumming events video recorded.



Palm Cockatoo

Probosciger aterrimus

Where found:

N Australia, New Guinea and adjacent islands

Ecology:

Conspicuous, lordly in behaviour. Non-flocking species that travels singly, in pairs, or in family groups of three. Calling begins at sunrise. Males display intensely in their territorial behaviour.

IUCN/CITES Status: Least Concern / Appendix I

Wild population: Known to be declining in the eastern part of its Australian range, but no research has been done on the western part of its Australian range where bauxite mining is prevalent.

Admittedly, this was still short of the sample size and statistical power we needed to properly analyse our data. But fortunately, this unexpected yet remarkable success sparked the interest of further financial support—this time from the Herman Slade Foundation—enabling us to fund a third field season of our quest to capture drumming on film.

As June 2014 approached, ‘work smarter, not harder’ was my mindful theme going into a seemingly impossible task: beat last year’s record.

After a two-day drive full of corrugated dirt roads and countless river crossings, I arrived to Lockhart River again for my fifth field season studying palms. I looked across the beautifully mosaicked landscape of rainforest and woodland, and it felt like a task as big as climbing Mt. Everest stood before me. I took a deep breath. ‘One by one,’ I told myself.

And I dove in.

With UHF radios in hand, my volunteer (Lachlan Hall) and I tag-teamed active palmie sites like well-trained combat soldiers closing in on a target. “Lachlan, do you have a copy? I have the female at Elusive Hollow, but I can’t see the male. Where are you?” “I’m at Upset Hollow, heading your way.” “Roger that. Hurry up. I think I hear him making a drumstick nearby.”

Crack, crack, crunch. My heartrate accelerated, but I remained motionless. If I flushed the female, the male would leave, too, and their behaviour would be spoiled. Luckily though, Lachlan is a quick runner. “I can hear him drumming. Do you have him? I repeat: do you have him?” In exhaustion from the run, he replies, “Yes, I got it. I’m filming. He’s drumming.” I wiped the sweat from my eyebrows. Phew. One down.

For six weeks straight, we didn’t see the morning light at my bush-camp. After seven terabytes of hard-drives and a whirlwind of fieldwork and data entry, the unimaginable became reality. I had more than doubled last year’s already impressive record, including having recorded the most remarkable, tight-frame and pin-sharp footage of drumming I have yet to date (to be released soon!).

Totaling 681 man-hours spent in the bush on the quest for drumming in 2014, the final figure was a staggering 34 drumming events successfully video recorded.

Overall, it has been a 9 ½ month-long journey in the field across three years on Rob’s and my quest. Now, we finally have enough data to analyse and describe this breathtaking and exceptional behaviour. Although we cannot reveal our results until they are fully analysed and published in scientific journals, I *can* say that Palm Cockatoos continue to amaze us in the complexity of their behaviour. 📺



About the Author:

Prior to moving to Australia in 2008, Christina Zdenek attained a Bachelor’s of Biological Sciences degree at the University of California, Irvine. Since completing a two-year Masters degree in 2009 on a Fulbright Fellowship, she has been seasonally employed by The Australian National University (ANU) as a Conservation Officer for The Palm Cockatoo Project for the past three years.



[Christina Zdenek and Lachlan Hall]

© Richie Southerton



That darned parrot is screaming its head off all the time. Your last nerve has just left the building. Your partner is threatening to leave you and your neighbours are complaining vehemently about the noise. What can you do?

THE PARROT THAT SCREAMS

By Lee McGuire

Before we go any further, we need to understand what exactly we mean by the word “screaming” since that is the specific behaviour we are interested in. When we talk about “screaming” parrots in this instance, we are speaking of **loud, repetitive, sustained vocalizations** from an otherwise normal healthy bird. Loud vocalizations from a bird that is ill fall into a different category and will not be addressed in this article. For the purposes of this article we will deal with the single bird. Multiple birds will have their own dynamic in play.

In the home situation, more often than not, screaming is the result of a contact call that has been supersized. How could that happen? Why would it happen? For a moment let’s forget about parrots and think about ourselves. Have you ever called to your children or your partner – and they didn’t answer? What did you do next? I’ll bet you raised your voice and called a little louder – and louder still if they again didn’t answer. The same process often applies to parrots who call those they live with using pleasant sounds that we either ignore, or don’t hear because our ear isn’t quite tuned into the background noise of sounds that don’t meet the annoyance factor particular to each of us. At that point, the parrot does the same thing that we do – it raises its voice to be heard. Simply put, we have inadvertently taught this parrot to scream louder and longer.

OK, now that we understand how a parrot can learn to scream in some situations, what can we do about it? Before we start throwing out fixes willy-nilly, we need to understand when the behaviour occurs and what this particular bird **gets** when it screams. If we take a scalpel and remove all the editorial comments that we humans are prone to surround each behaviour with, and look at what happens immediately **before** (*antecedent*) and immediately **after** (*consequence*) the behaviour, we might see something like the following typical examples:

EXAMPLE 1:

- Antecedent:** Person leaves room
- Behaviour:** Parrot screams
- Consequence:** Person opens door and says “shut up”
- Prediction:** The parrot will scream more

EXAMPLE 2:

- Antecedent:** Person comes home from work
- Behaviour:** Parrot screams
- Consequence:** Person says hello quietly
- Prediction:** The parrot will scream more

Notice that in each of the examples, the bird gets something in ways we might not expect. In these two cases, what we might think is an action that will reduce the behaviour is in actuality serving as what is called a **positive reinforcer** - a reward, from the parrot’s point of view, for screaming. The examples noted are functionally equivalent in that human attention is the maintaining factor in the consequence.

Since a bird and its living conditions in each home are unique, these scenarios give us some hypotheses that provide a glimmer of the function the behaviour serves. What can we do about it? We can change what happens before the behaviour occurs, reinforce sounds that the bird makes that we can live with, change what happens after the behaviour occurs, or we can teach the bird some new behaviours so that it gets other more natural reinforcers. It is that simple and yet that complicated.

The length of time it takes to change the screaming behaviour will vary. Screaming can be one of the most difficult behaviours to change, but it can be done – although it is a little labour intensive for the human in the beginning. Let’s take a look at some possible changes that we could work into our hectic schedules.

ANTECEDENT CHANGES

Before the screaming behaviour occurs, we could:

- Provide the parrot with some one-on-one time. Chatting, grooming to remove feather sheaths in a moulting bird, or going for a safe and supervised wander around the home are some examples.
- If the bird is caged, move the cage or play stand to a safe area where there is a greater possibility to interact with the family.
- Provide foraging opportunities in the cage and on the play area to stimulate behaviours that might occur in the wild. Toy boxes can contain a part of the daily food allowance, treats and/or different types of foot toys. Depending on the bird, the boxes can be made of cardboard, wood, safe reeds, stainless steel or other non-toxic materials.
- Ensure that the parrot gets enough exercise, whether it be running, flying or some form of calisthenics. (Tired birds are less likely to scream.)

- Make it a practice to drop by the bird for a minute or two while the bird is behaving in an appropriate way. Taking a moment to say “Hi how are you?” can go a long way to pre-empting screaming behaviour because we are providing that attention discussed above **before** the screaming occurs.

CONSEQUENCE CHANGES

If we want to reduce the amount of screaming that takes place, we can reinforce other behaviours that serve the same function as screaming.

- Pick some sounds the bird makes we can live with long term. Whistling, talking, soft sounds are always good candidates to choose and provide attention when those occur. That often means we will need to train ourselves to hear those sounds when they occur - listen for the soft pleasant contact calls and respond.
- Withdraw all form of attention when the bird is screaming. That is extremely hard for most of us to do as we will lose that last nerve discussed earlier and respond in some way with a look or some vocalization of our own. It is therefore not recommended to respond to the calls unless we are able to **immediately** catch the parrot being good the instant it stops screaming.
- Reinforce longer and longer durations of playing with toys, chewing on suitable materials, relaxing on the perch - or as in our house, laughing. Pick the behaviours you can live with long term and encourage them.

TEACHING NEW BEHAVIOURS AND SKILLS

The world our parrots inhabits and what we can teach it are endless. Any teaching at all will serve the function of providing the same attention discussed above, while also greatly increasing the overall amount of reinforcement in a bird’s daily life.

Whether this parrot needs to learn to step-up, forage, play with different types of toys, flap their wings, use the cage as a jungle gym, station to a specific perch, come when called, or enter a crate for transport, we can teach those behaviours. Useful behaviours can enrich a parrot’s life and make it more behaviourally healthy, which in turn, makes everyone a little happier. 🐦

About the Author

Lee McGuire has partnered with parrots to effectively understand and communicate with them for close to 50 years. Initially, her interest in behaviour modification stemmed from the arrival of a biting, screaming, frightened Mitred Conure. That event led to an ongoing search for behaviour modification strategies, and to the discovery of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Lee has a special interest in good ‘psittizenship’ behaviours in the home, and in the applications of ABA especially as it relates to shaping and physiotherapy. Since 2004, Lee has been Dr. Susan Friedman’s teaching partner and facilitator for her online course “*Living and Learning with Parrots*” and assistant for teaching the Professional behaviour course “*Living and Learning with Animals*” (behaviorworks.org). Lee also shares her time and knowledge with WPT members as an “Ask An Expert” online at parrots.org.

PART ONE

BACK TO BRAZIL:

Stories of conservation in South America

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS © EVET LOEWEN

Longtime WPT friend Evet Loewen shares her return to the country she once lived in to witness her contributions in action

DAY 1. RETURNING TO BRAZIL

The Delta overnight flight from Atlanta touched down in the São Paulo, Brazil, at 7:41 AM on February 28.

My previous trip to Brazil had been in the summer of 1974 to undertake an undergraduate research project, and I was understandably anxious and excited. More than 40 years had passed since I had last been in the country.

My family lived in Salvador, the capitol of the state of Bahia, in the late 1960's to early 70's. I returned stateside in 1971, then visited again in 1972 and then in 1974. My memories of that period in my life are colorful, intense, and transformative.

I came from a conservative town in central Texas. Bahia could not have been more different. From the pristine beaches, to the colonial architecture and Bahia's time as the first capitol of Brazil, to the music of samba, bossa nova, and the then very new music "tropicalismo", and the street vendors selling "acarajé" -- a spicy "cake" of shrimp cooked in palm oil -- on the corner across the street -- it was all new, all very exotic, and very Brazilian. I found Brazilians to be warm, extroverted, hospitable, and eager to teach me Portuguese and about their culture. That remains true today.

I had barely turned 17 when my family moved there, and did not understand the implications of what I saw on the streets and in some hotels and stores -- evidence of the

wild bird trade. One of the better hotels had bright red large macaws sitting in narrow cages in the entryway. One day I saw a Toco Toucan in a cage, for sale on the street, and wanted to buy it but my allowance would not take me that far and my parents knew better. I wound up purchasing a woven tapestry of a toucan instead, still with me today.

My Mother, on the other hand, did purchase many species of small birds brought to our apartment by the vendors who had probably just captured them from the forested areas outside the city. We took them by car to some area that we thought would be appropriate -- if it seemed wild and had trees -- but we did not understand that different species would need different habitats. They were released back into the wild in what, today, I would call a "hard release". Well-intended, but not scientifically-based in the least.

These misadventures from 40+ years ago all likely occurred prior to the laws and regulations in effect in Brazil today, to protect the diverse and beautiful native species throughout that country. This 2015 trip was to be dramatically different in that my appreciation for the diversity of species in Brazil had mushroomed. I had become a parrot enthusiast, and totally by accident, have had many small macaws whose native habitat includes Brazil (all have been bred in the USA).

Over time, my interest in parrots migrated from parrot collector to parrot protector.



So, when Word Parrot Trust Director Jamie Gilardi suggested that I return to Brazil, meet WPT's Brazil Programme Manager André Saldenberg, and visit a couple of sites where Brazilians and Americans are dedicated to the conservation of parrots there, I knew I had to go.

My roles at the WPT are varied as a volunteer – sometimes I serve as a volunteer legal advisor, give my personal business advice; sometimes I am an informal representative of the Trust, especially for students who assist in caring for my flock, and sometimes I am a donor. I think Jamie wanted me to see a couple of instances where contributions I had made were actually making a difference for parrots.

So it was a mixture of memory and anticipation, and some anxiety, that I felt as the airplane touched down at Garulhos International Airport in São Paulo. I was loaded with camera equipment, some of mine and some belonging to WPT. As I wended my way to customs and immigration, I attempted to discern what the Brazilians around me were saying. It wasn't easy. If one doesn't practice, one forgets, and I had forgotten *muito* (a great deal)!

AN ISLAND, MEALY AMAZONS, MAROON-BELLIED CONURES, BROTOGERIS, AND TOCO TOUCANS

Very early on the morning of February 28, I first met André, identifiable by the Golden Conure T-shirt he was wearing. He is very considerate of others, and absolutely lives up to the high regard in which his colleagues hold him as a scientist and conservationist. The more time I was able to spend with him, the more I learned about parrots.

We rented a car at the Airport, and headed out on a 4-hour road trip to a place called “Ilhabela”, an island off the Atlantic coast of São Paulo where Silvana Davino and Pablo Merero operate “Release area Cambaquara.” Along the way, we passed by both the “Mata Atlantica,” the dense forested areas where many birds and other species

live, as well as large cleared areas where cattle are raised. The difference is quite stark. André indicated that such forested areas along the highway were all second growth.

A short ferry ride is necessary to get to the island. From the mainland, the island appears to be nearly all forested. This appeared to be a good and relatively safe area for the rescue and rehabilitation operation operated by Pablo and Silvana.

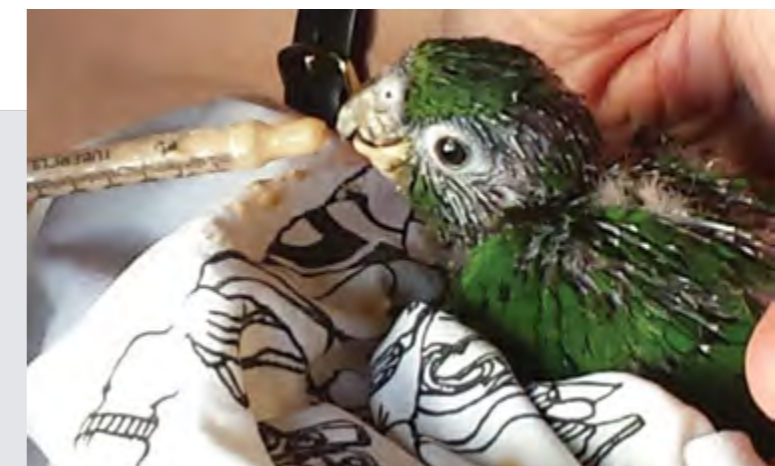
The aviaries for preparing Mealy Amazons (*Amazona f. farinosa*), Maroon-bellied Conures (*Pyrrhura frontalis*); and Plain Parakeets (*Brotogeris tirica*) are set up near their residence. Even with the human presence there the island is densely forested, already has wild populations and seems like a very safe release spot for these parrots.

After settling in the guest quarters, we soon got a tour of the aviaries. The thing that I was most impressed by was the incorporation of native fruit-bearing plants into the aviaries – a process necessary to acclimate any species to a “soft release” back into the wild.

Silvana gave me the opportunity to hand feed a baby Maroon-bellied Conure. I had not done so since being sold an unweaned Severe Macaw (*Ara severus*), my first bird Pepper, way back in 1998. I smiled the entire time I was with this youngster.

Pablo and Silvana are generous hosts. Pablo prepared appetizers and “caipirinhas”, a particularly favorite alcoholic beverage consisting of cachaça and fresh lime. We sat on a deck and watched wild toucans fly into a nearby very tall tree – what a sight!

It was the end of a very long day for me – arriving in São Paulo early in the morning after a 10-hour flight from Atlanta, meeting André for the first time, driving to the Atlantic coast and catching the ferry to meet with Pablo and Silvana and see their wonderful aviaries. A long sleep was sorely needed. So, to bed!



(top left) Mealy Amazon (*Amazona farinosa*) in enclosure
(bottom left) One of the exercise flights nearing completion at the release area Cambaquara
(top right) Ewet Loewen feeding a Maroon-bellied Conure (*Pyrrhura frontalis*) chick
(middle left) Palm fruits (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*) as teaching aids: learning to forage in the wild
(middle right) Signage reads: Release Area Cambaquara. Release and Monitoring Area for Wildlife
(bottom right) Maroon-bellied Conure chick having a meal

DAY 2. CAMBAQUARA

The following morning, I awoke to the sound of wild Mealy Amazons passing and circling overhead, with the responses of those in the aviaries below them. Quite raucous, but music to the ears of a parrot aficionado! Pablo prepared a breakfast of fresh fruit, cereal, and café. Then we were off on the path on a rocky descent to the ocean, to overlook the water as the sun rose higher in the sky.

And finally, a look at a work in progress. The release aviary was being constructed on a rocky hillside, so to get it in place and level was quite an engineering feat. It was surrounded on all sides by vegetation and very private, yet the birds could clearly get a good view of the site around them -- important for a successful soft release where the birds could come back to the release aviary for food and security. It was very exciting to see how meticulously the release aviary was being built. It was also gratifying to know that my actions as a donor had facilitated this construction.

But, there was no time to spare. André, ever the diligent scientist and veterinarian, was concerned about preparing for the release of the Vinaceous Amazons (*Amazona vinacea*) at the other prime location I was invited to visit -- the Lymington Foundation. So we could not stay another night at Ilhabela. At 3 PM, we started a 7-hour car ride to get us there. It was another very long day, but full of good people doing good deeds.

DAY 3. THE VINACEOUS AMAZON AND BILL AND LINDA WITTKOFF

On March 1st we arrived late in the night at the Wittkoffs' Lymington Foundation. I had heard about the amazing beauty and grace of this place from a former caretaker of my birds, Mary McTague. Both André and I were exhausted. Bill and Linda had very kindly set me up in

a beautiful one-bedroom house owned by one of their sons, across the lake from the Lymington property. Sleep came easily.

Linda is an early riser due to the incredible amount of work that must be done each day. Bill, too, is occupied over the variable internet which seems to go out every other day and thus gives major headaches on a regular basis. He takes care of correspondence and Lymington Foundation business. It was my privilege to spend four days there, getting to know Bill and Linda a little better.

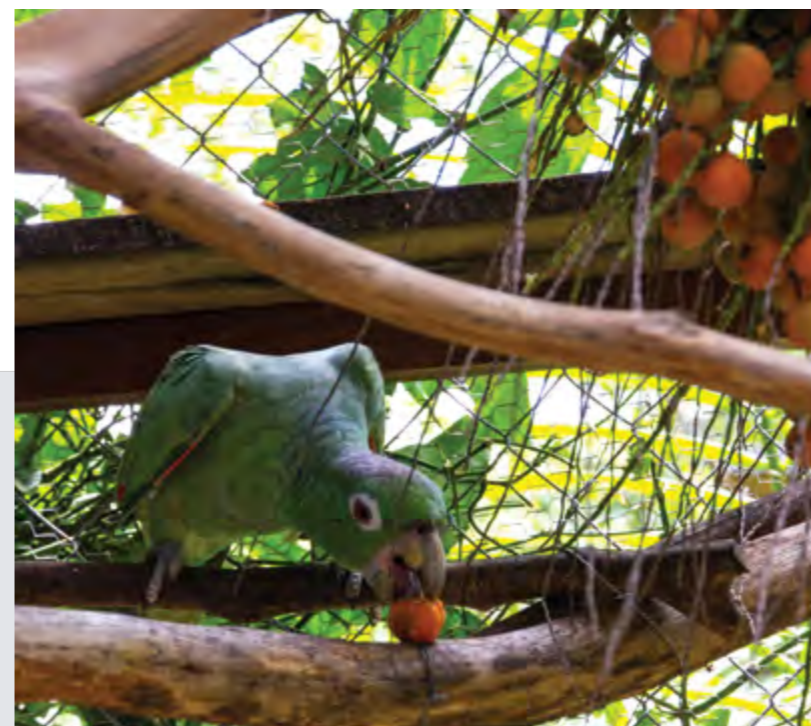
I was also to see the release of Vinaceous Amazons later in the week. But that first Monday, right off, André had to return immediately to see his avian veterinarian in São Paulo, as one of the *vinacea* was very ill and needed treatment. With his typical dedication, he took off in the rental car again - but not before I got my first view of these parrots being prepared for release, and of the flight aviary that from afar I had contributed to through the World Parrot Trust.

Linda fed me breakfast, then gave me a tour of their immaculate and beautiful aviaries, full of Golden Conures (*Guaruba guarouba*), Hyacinth Macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*), and Blue-and-yellow Macaws (*Ara ararauna*). Truthfully I was totally envious of the condition of the birds, the beauty of the place, the obvious careful organization for care of the birds. How could one not be? It is a tremendous amount of work and I hope Linda and Bill gain great satisfaction from it every single day.

André returned later that day. Immediately, he resumed preparing the native fruits and plants for the crew of 18 Vinaceous Amazons he was caring for. No rest for the determined. All too quickly it became dark and it was time to head back to "my house" across the lake to get some rest. I slept 10 hours that night. I needed to be rested: Tomorrow the countdown to their release would begin. 📺

About the Author

Evet Loewen is an attorney who practised municipal law for 30 years with the City of San Jose, California. Her legal experience there included a wide range of legal issues, including environmental law. In 2005 Evet became a lifetime member of the World Parrot Trust, and in 2011 she became a volunteer legal advisor for the WPT. In the past year her involvement in WPT conservation work has expanded to include support of the release of parrots to the wild, focused on projects in Brazil, Bolivia, and Bonaire.



(top) Golden Conures (*Guaruba guarouba*) interact with each other in their enclosure
(middle left) Hyacinth Macaw pair (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*) engage in mating behaviour
(middle right) Maroon-bellied Conure (*Pyrrhura frontalis*) rests after a day of foraging and enrichment
(bottom left) Mealy Amazon (*Amazona farinosa*) sampling a native palm fruit (*Syagrus romanzoffiana*)

Watch for **Part Two: Countdown to Release** in the Autumn 2015 issue of *PsittaScene*.

NEWS

Paradise Park welcomes Critically Endangered Grey-breasted Conures



© Alison Hales

A group young Grey-breasted Conures (*Pyrrhura griseipectus*) are now on display in an aviary at Paradise Park in Hayle, Cornwall – a first for the wildlife sanctuary. In the wild, the species' population has declined due to habitat destruction, and the original forest cover is now reduced to only 13% due to agriculture. These parrots also have suffered greatly from the effects of trapping.

Curator David Woolcock comments, "This is a new parrot species for Paradise Park. These youngsters came here from Chester Zoo, where they have bred them successfully. We have also arranged for unrelated birds to be paired with them to create a breeding group in the future. We are keen to co-operate in creating a healthy captive population because the status of the species in the wild is Critically Endangered."

Paradise Park : paradisepark.org.uk

Release of Orange-fronted Parakeets to mainland New Zealand a first



© Jack van Hal | New Zealand Department of Conservation

Rare Orange-fronted Parakeets (*Cyanoramphus malherbi*) have been released in New Zealand in an attempt to re-establish a population in a valley in Canterbury's high country - a vast inland area of river plains, hills and high mountain pastures.

The birds, bred in a facility run by the Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust, were set free in mid-March of this year in the Hurunui South Branch to increase the handful of individuals left there. The centre is the only one to breed these birds, the most endangered of the parakeets of the area. The release was possible because of intensive work by the Department of Conservation over the last decade to control high populations of rat and stoat, which devastated the population fifteen years ago.

ICWT: isaacconservation.org.nz



7th Annual Parrot Lover's Cruise

October 25 - November 1, 2015

Western Caribbean

Ports of Call: New Orleans, Montego Bay, George Town and Cozumel. **Guest Speakers:** Animal training, behaviour and enrichment specialist **Lara Joseph**, and **Joanna Eckles** of Audubon Minnesota.

Book your seat today!

carolstraveltime@gmail.com

1-570-470-5006

WWW.PARROTLOVERSCRUISE.COM

EVENTS

Parrot Lover's Cruise 2015

Western Caribbean
October 25 - November 1, 2015

Departing from New Orleans, LA, ports of call will include Montego Bay, George Town and Cozumel on this spectacular cruise! Plus, this year's guest speaker will be animal training, behaviour and enrichment specialist Lara Joseph, of The Animal Behaviour Center. Also on this year's list: Joanna Eckles of Audubon Minnesota will speak on the current projects of the World Parrot Trust and other groups around the world.

Book your spot today!
parrotloverscruise.com

Avian Discovery Tours

Australia
September 19 - October 4, 2015

Join adventure company **Avian Discovery Tours** on a thrilling 16-day parrot lover's dream tour to see Australia's parrots! From flocks of budgies to cockatoos, parrots encounters await!

Book early, as the limit is 8 participants. Plus, a percentage of the tour cost is donated directly to the World Parrot Trust, to support efforts in parrot conservation.

Learn more:
aviandiscoverytours@gmail.com
aviandiscoverytours.com

OPPORTUNITIES

Kaarakin Black Cockatoo Conservation Centre - call for volunteers

Kaarakin is a non-profit conservation organisation located in Western Australia with a focus on saving the black cockatoos, and they are in need of extra help. If you live in the Perth area and have experience in the clinical care of birds, the centre could use your help. Clinic volunteers must commit to a regular 4-hour shift (or more if desired) on the same day each week.

Learn more:
kaarakin@kaarakin.com
blackcockatoorecovery.com



Red-tailed Black Cockatoo © Alison Hales

SPECIAL THANKS

WPT and The Ara Project are grateful to **Mark Hagen**, Director of Hagen Avicultural Research Institute (HARI) in Canada, for his continued contributions to parrot conservation! Mark recently visited The Ara Project in Punta Islita, Costa Rica, bringing with him suitcases full of parrot food and vitamins. In addition to the HARI products, he also donated a much-needed \$5,000 to assist with the project's vital work.

CORRECTION NOTICE

The Spring issue of *PsittaScene* listed the **Save the Orange-bellied Parrot** link incorrectly. The program can actually be found at facebook.com/orangebelliedparrot.

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